

Subject: Conflict-of-Interest Policy

Date:

Prior version Date(s):

Purpose: Decision making in matters in which a conflict of interest may exist may not only create an appearance of impropriety but may violate the law. Woodbury County believes that it is useful to attempt to reduce to written form some basic guidelines to which staff members can refer in evaluating potential conflict situations. Woodbury County publishes these guidelines mindful of the fact that the good judgment of its staff is essential, and that no list of rules or guidelines can provide direction for all the varied circumstances that may arise.

Guidelines:

1. Each staff member has a duty to act in the best interests of Woodbury County.
2. Staff members who have, directly or through family or business connections, an interest in suppliers of goods or services, or in contractors or potential contractors with Woodbury County should not undertake to act for Woodbury County in any transaction involving that interest unless fully disclosed and authorized by the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors or their designee. No staff member shall participate in the selection, award or administration of a contract with any party with whom he is negotiating respecting potential employment or has any arrangement concerning potential employment.
3. Staff members shall avoid outside employment or business activity involving obligations which may in any way conflict, or appear to conflict, with Woodbury County's interests, including its interest in the full or part-time as the case may be, services of its staff members. Consultation arrangements for which the staff member will receive compensation should be cleared with the staff member's department head, the elected official to whom they report, or, in the case of supervisory personnel and department heads, to the Director of Human Resources for Woodbury County or other designee of the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors.
4. Each staff member shall provide full disclosure of any business or financial enterprise or activity in which he or she is involved which might influence, or might appear to have the capacity to influence his or her official decisions or actions on Woodbury County matters. Disclosure shall be in a writing tendered to the staff member's department head, the elected official to whom they report, or, in the case of supervisory personnel and department heads, to the Director of Human Resources for Woodbury County or other designee of the Woodbury County Board of Supervisors.

5. Staff members shall refrain from personal activities, including but not limited to the purchase or sale of securities, real property or other goods or services, in which they could use, or might appear to have the opportunity to use, for personal gain, confidential information or special knowledge gained as a result of their relationship with Woodbury County.
6. Each staff member shall refrain from unauthorized disclosure of non- public information concerning Woodbury County's intentions, its investments, its property development, sale or acquisition, its purchasing or its contracting activities.
7. No staff member shall make unauthorized use of Woodbury County resources for his or her personal benefit or for the benefit of any other person.
8. It is sound practice to discourage personal gifts and favors from people with whom Woodbury County has a business relationship. Personal gifts of more than nominal value should be tactfully declined or returned, to avoid any appearance or suggestion of improper influence. Those staff members involved in the awarding or administration of contracts using federal or other government funds should keep in mind that they are prohibited by law from soliciting or accepting gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors or potential contractors.
9. Staff members doing business on behalf of Woodbury County with specific vendors shall refrain from participating with representatives of those vendors on vacation trips. Such trips are not appropriate, even when staff members pay to the vendor a fee to participate in such trips.
10. No staff member shall act in any Woodbury County matter involving a member of his or her immediate family, including but not limited to matters affecting such family member's employment, evaluation or advancement in Woodbury County without first making full disclosure in the manner described in paragraph four above. Such disclosure shall include the nature of the familial relationship and the impact or potential impact of the staff member's action on such family member.
11. In any case in which a staff member believes that his or her conduct or activities may conflict with these guidelines or activities, may appear to conflict with these guidelines or may otherwise create a conflict of interest, the staff member should disclose the details of his or her situation with a responsible Woodbury County official in the manner described in paragraph four above.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Reference Section IX, pages 3 and 4 of the Woodbury County Employee Handbook

Employees shall not engage in any outside employment activity or enterprise that is inconsistent, incompatible with, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform assigned duties for the County.

The County expects regular, full-time employees to consider County work their primary employment. Any other employment must be compatible, without conflict of interest, or schedule. Employees may not engage in the following outside employment or self-employment activities, which are considered to be inconsistent with, incompatible with, and interfere with County employment:

- 1) Any employment activity that prevents an employee from being available for work beyond normal working hours, such as emergencies or peak work periods, when such availability is an expectation of the employee's job
- 2) Any employment activity or enterprise that involves the use of the County's time, facilities, equipment, or supplies, or the prestige and influence of a County office, or employment for private gain
- 3) Employment with a firm that has a contract with or does business with the County
- 4) Activities that involve the receipt or acceptance of money or other considerations by a County employee from anyone other than the County for the performance of activities that the employee is required or expected to provide in the course of the employee's employment with the County
- 5) Activities that involve so much of the employee's time that it impairs the employee's attendance or efficiency in the performance of duties assigned by the County
- 6) Activities that may reasonably be perceived by members of the public to constitute a conflict of interest or otherwise discredit public service.

Employees who engage in any outside employment or self-employment must notify their department head and the Director of Human Resources in writing of such activities.

I _____ understand and recognize the above policy from the employee handbook. I have also been given the conflict of interest policy. I recognize the areas of potential conflict of interest and realize that I must report any of these including outside employment of any kind to the Human Resources Director and to my department head at least annually. I will provide immediate notice should I accept new outside employment or if my relationships with vendors who do business with Woodbury County should change.

It may also be a conflict of interest if my spouse, significant other, or close relative own, are employed by, serve on the board of, or have significant interest in a company, organization, or entity of any kind which does business with Woodbury County.

Signed:

Dated: _____

Disclosure:

I have employment with the following organization:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Please describe the employment and hours worked above

My spouse, significant other, close relative, or I have significant interest with the following companies or organizations that do business with Woodbury County:

1) _____

2) _____

Please provide details including the person's relationship to you and the person's interest in the company, entity, or organization.

All such interests shall be disclosed. Failure to disclose such interest shall be deemed to be a violation of work rules and will be dealt with as such.

It shall be up to the Board and the Department Head or elected official to determine whether the conflict of interest requires more than disclosure.